

➤ Naval Surface Fire Support



DISCUSSION

Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare relies heavily on long-range, accurate, and responsive naval surface fire support (NSFS). Robust, around-the-clock, all-weather, sea-based fires are the only joint capability that can fully meet the requirements of expeditionary maneuver operations and be integrated with other joint-force fires over an extended littoral battlespace.

The Navy's current NSFS capability, however, is inadequate in terms of range, volume, and accuracy. In the near-term, the Navy is working to improve its existing capabilities by developing the Mk 45 Mod 4, 5-inch/62-caliber gun system and extended-range munitions, the combination of which will provide fire support out to an objective range of 63 nautical miles. This gun is currently being installed on all newly built

Arleigh Burke-class destroyers (DDG 51), and the 5-inch Extended Range Guided Munition (ERGM) is currently scheduled for a FY 2006 initial operational capability.

In addition to gun systems, the Navy's current and future fleet of surface combatants requires an advanced land-attack missile to provide responsive, all-weather fire support to the Marine commander operating beyond the range of extended-range gun munitions, up to 200 nautical miles inland. Currently, there is no funded program of record that will meet USMC requirements in this area.

In the far-term, the Navy will fully meet the Marine Corps' NSFS requirements with the introduction into the surface fleet of the DD(X) destroyer and its associated land-attack systems. The DD(X) will be armed



with Advanced Land Attack Missiles (ALAM) and two 155mm Advanced Gun Systems (AGS) with sufficient magazine capacity to support sustained operations ashore. Additionally, DD(X) will possess a multi-function, volume-search radar capable of providing a counter-battery detection capability from the sea.

While DD(X) will not be able to match the now-retired *Iowa*-class battleships in explosive power and shock effect, the increased range, accuracy, and rate of fire of the AGS will do much to counter current deficiencies. Given the fiscal reality of maintaining a combat-ready force capable of meeting today's contingencies while preparing for the potential adversaries of the 21st century, the DD(X) concept offers a good balance between cost and capability. DD(X) is currently scheduled for a FY 2012 initial operational capability.

MARINE CORPS POSITION

Critical deficiencies currently exist in the capability of the Navy to provide accurate, lethal and responsive fire support from the sea in support of expeditionary operations. The Marine Corps supports the Navy's near-term efforts to develop an enhanced NSFS capability with the fielding of the 5-inch/62-caliber naval gun and the development of extended-range munitions.

In the far-term, the Marine Corps supports the development and fielding of DD(X), armed with two 155mm Advanced Gun Systems and an Advanced Land Attack Missile, to fully meet our NSFS requirements. Our nation's ability to wage expeditionary warfare will remain at considerable risk for want of suitable sea-based fire support until DD(X) joins the fleet in strength.